

## I CLAIM:

- 1           1. A method of processing meat comprising the steps of:
- 2           a) contacting bodies of meat originally stored at a
- 3           relatively low temperature with a treating solution;
- 4           b) agitating said bodies of meat in contact with said
- 5           treating solution at a predetermined elevated temperature above
- 6           said low temperature and maintaining said elevated temperature
- 7           substantially constant while agitating said meat for a period of
- 8           time sufficient to distribute the treating solution in the meat
- 9           in at least one first treating vessel;
- 10           c) thereafter cooling the bodies of meat in at least
- 11           one second vessel; and
- 12           d) recovering said bodies of meat in a cooled state
- 13           below said elevated temperature and substantially dry.

1           2. The method defined in claim 1 wherein said bodies

2           of meat are heated in a further vessel prior to being delivered

3           to said first vessel.

1           3. The method defined in claim 2 wherein said bodies

2           of meat are heated by contact with a solution prior to being

3           delivered to said first vessel.

1           4. The method defined in claim 1 wherein said bodies  
2 of meat are heated in contact with said solution in said first  
3 vessel.

1           5. The method defined in claim 1 wherein said bodies  
2 of meat are transferred from said first vessel to a plurality of  
3 said second vessels.

1           6. The method defined in claim 1 wherein said bodies  
2 of meat are transferred from said first vessel to said second  
3 vessel by a conveyor.

1           7. An apparatus for the treatment of meat comprising:  
2           at least one first vessel for agitating bodies of meat  
3 in contact with a treating solution at a predetermined elevated  
4 temperature and for maintaining said temperature substantially  
5 constant while said meat is agitated therein for a period of time  
6 sufficient to distribute the treating solution in the meat; and  
7           at least one second vessel for receiving bodies of meat  
8 from said first vessel for cooling said bodies of meat to a  
9 temperature below said elevated temperature.

1           8. The apparatus defined in claim 7 wherein at least  
2 said first vessel is a rotary paddle massager or a tumbler.

1           9. The apparatus defined in claim 7 wherein at least  
2       said second vessel is a rotary paddle massager or tumbler.

1           10. The apparatus defined in claim 7 wherein at least  
2       one of said vessels has a jacket and said apparatus includes a  
3       system for passing a heated or cooled fluid through said jacket.

11. The apparatus defined in claim 7, further  
comprising a temperature controller for regulating temperature in  
at least one of said vessels within  $\pm 2^{\circ}\text{F}$ .

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